

A D-GROUP CURRICULUM

LIVE BY FAITH

FREED FROM SIN + DEATH

ROMANS CHAPTERS 3-5

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LIVE BY FAITH SERIES SCHEDULE

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HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

PURPOSE

The book of Romans is a cornerstone of Christian theology, offering profound insights into faith, salvation, and righteous living. This study guide aims to help you “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18) through an in-depth exploration of Paul’s letter to the Romans. As you engage with this guide, you’ll be equipped to live out your faith more authentically and to share the transformative power of the gospel in your daily life.

STRUCTURE

This guide is designed for a 6-week study, with each week focusing on a specific passage from Romans. Each week’s study includes:

- 1. Introduction:** Provides context and key themes for the week’s passage.
- 2. Scripture:** The full text of the week’s passage from the ESV translation.
- 3. Daily Personal Study:** Five days of reflection questions to deepen your understanding.
- 4. Daily Prayer:** A focused prayer related to the week’s scripture passage.
- 5. Group Discussion Questions:** Divided into three sections:
 - Know: Reflects on personal experiences related to the passage.
 - Grow: Dives deeper into the text, often incorporating related Scripture.
 - Show: Encourages practical application of the passage’s teachings.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

- 1. Personal Study**
 - Read the introduction and Scripture passage at the beginning of each week.
 - Engage with the Daily Personal Study questions throughout the week, spending time in prayer and reflection.
 - Use the provided space to journal your thoughts, questions, and insights.
- 2. Group Discussion**
 - Come prepared to share your reflections from your personal study.
 - Engage openly and honestly with the Know, Grow, and Show questions.
 - Be ready to both share your own insights and learn from others in your group.
- 3. Application**
 - Pay special attention to the “Show” questions each week, which challenge you to apply the Scripture to your daily life.
 - Look for ways to live out the truths you’re learning in your family, workplace, and community.

4. Continuous Growth

- As you progress through the study, notice how Paul builds his argument throughout Romans.
- Reflect on how each week's passage contributes to the overall theme of "living by faith."

Remember, the goal of this study is not just to gain knowledge, but to be transformed by God's Word. As you engage with Romans, pray for the Holy Spirit to illuminate the text and guide you in applying its truths to your life.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, 'The righteous shall live by faith.'" — Romans 1:16–17

INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 3–5

Romans chapters 3–5 contain some of the most profound and transformative truths of the Christian faith. Having established the universal need for salvation in chapters 1–2, Paul now unfolds the glorious solution found in the gospel of Jesus Christ. These chapters form the theological heart of Romans, presenting the doctrine of justification by faith and its implications for our lives.

In Romans 3, we encounter the climax of Paul's argument about human sinfulness and God's righteousness, culminating in the powerful declaration that we are "justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (3:24). Chapter 4 then illustrates this truth through the example of Abraham, demonstrating that justification by faith has always been God's way of relating to His people. Finally, chapter 5 explores the rich blessings that flow from our justification, including peace with God, access to His grace, and the hope of sharing in His glory.

As we study these pivotal chapters, we'll grapple with concepts that are central to our faith yet often challenging to fully grasp: the nature of God's righteousness, the role of the law, the meaning of faith, and the transformative power of grace. We'll be challenged to examine our own understanding of salvation and to root our identity more deeply in Christ's finished work. Through it all, we'll see how these truths are not merely theoretical but profoundly practical, shaping how we view ourselves, relate to others, and live out our faith in a world that desperately needs the hope found in the gospel.

WEEK 8: ROMANS 3:1–20

INTRODUCTION

In Romans 3:1–20, Paul builds on his previous arguments to show that all people, both Jews and Gentiles, stand guilty before God. This section might have been particularly challenging for Paul's original Jewish audience, who believed their heritage and possession of God's law gave them a special standing. Today, we might struggle with similar tensions, perhaps relying on our religious background or good deeds for righteousness. Paul's words confront our tendency towards self-justification and religious pride, reminding us that "no one is righteous, not even one" (v. 10). Yet even as we grapple with the sobering reality of universal sin, we're reminded of God's unwavering faithfulness. This passage sets the stage for the incredible good news of justification by faith, which we'll explore in the coming weeks.

ROMANS 3:1–20 (ESV)

¹ Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the value of circumcision?
² Much in every way. To begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God. ³ What if some were unfaithful? Does their faithlessness nullify the faithfulness of God? ⁴ By no means! Let God be true though every one were a liar, as it is written, "That you may be justified in your words, and prevail when you are judged."⁵ But if our unrighteousness serves to show the righteousness of God, what shall we say? That God is unrighteous to inflict wrath on us? (I speak in a human way.) ⁶ By no means! For then how could God judge the world? ⁷ But if through my lie God's truth abounds to his glory, why am I still being condemned as a sinner? ⁸ And why not do evil that good may come?—as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just. ⁹ What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, ¹⁰ as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; ¹¹ no one understands; no one seeks for God. ¹² All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one."¹³ "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips."¹⁴ "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness."¹⁵ "Their feet are swift to shed blood; ¹⁶ in their paths are ruin and misery, ¹⁷ and the way of peace they have not known."¹⁸ "There is no fear of God before their eyes."¹⁹ Now we know that whatever the law says it speaks to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may be held accountable to God. ²⁰ For by works of the law no human being will be justified in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin.

DAILY PERSONAL STUDY: ROMANS 3:1–20 (WEEK 8)

Day One

Read Romans 3:1–8. Reflect on Paul's discussion of God's faithfulness despite human unfaithfulness. How does this challenge or reinforce your understanding of God's character? Consider how this relates to the theme of "living by faith" we've been exploring in this series. Compare this with God's faithfulness as described in 2 Timothy 2:13.

Day Two

Focus on Romans 3:9–12. Paul argues that both Jews and Greeks are under sin. How does this universal indictment of humanity relate to the "power of God for salvation" we studied in Romans 1:16? Reflect on how this truth impacts your view of yourself and others.

Day Three

Examine the list of sins in Romans 3:13–18. How do these verses reveal the depth and breadth of human sinfulness? Consider how this passage relates to our study of God's wrath in Romans 1:18–32. How does it deepen your understanding of our need for the gospel?

Day Four

Meditate on Romans 3:19–20, focusing on the purpose of the law. How does this relate to Paul's statement about "the righteousness of God" in Romans 1:17? Reflect on how the law brings knowledge of sin in your own life. Compare this with Galatians 3:24–25 for further insight.

Day Five

Consider the overall argument of Romans 3:1–20 in light of our series theme "Live by Faith." How does Paul's exposition of universal sinfulness and the insufficiency of the law to save prepare us for the good news of justification by faith? Reflect on how this passage challenges you to rely more fully on God's grace rather than your own efforts.

DAILY PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

Heavenly Father, as we study Your Word, help us to grasp the depth of our need for Your grace. May we not shy away from the hard truths about our sinfulness,

but instead let them drive us to a deeper appreciation of Your mercy and faithfulness. Help us to live by faith, trusting not in our own righteousness, but in the righteousness that comes through Christ. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Know

Romans 3:1–20 addresses profound questions about human nature, sin, and God's righteousness. As we begin our discussion, let's reflect on our own experiences that relate to the themes Paul addresses in this passage.

- Can you share a time when you felt like you didn't measure up to a certain standard? How did that experience affect you?
- Jonathan Edwards said "You contribute nothing to your salvation except the sin that made it necessary." How do you see this reflected in this passage?

Grow

Paul's argument in this passage builds on the universal need for God's grace, challenging both Jewish and Gentile notions of righteousness. As John Stott observes, "God's faithfulness is not cancelled out by human faithlessness." Let's delve deeper into the text to understand its implications for our faith.

- Verses 3–4 emphasize God's faithfulness despite human unfaithfulness. How have you experienced God's faithfulness in your own life, even when you or others have been unfaithful?
- In verses 5–8, Paul refutes the idea that our sin somehow enhances God's righteousness. Why do you think people might be tempted to justify sin this way? How would you respond to someone with this view?
- Read 3:10–18 and pay attention to the absolutes. How many times do these verses say "None/no one/not even"? What picture does that paint of the human condition?
- Verses 19–20 explain the purpose of God's law. R.C. Sproul states: "The law functions as a mirror to show us our sin, not as a ladder by which we climb to righteousness." (The Gospel of God: Romans, 1994) How does this perspective change the way we view God's commands?

Show

As we conclude, let's consider how to apply these truths to our daily lives. Remember, as the notes suggest, "We're all in the same boat! We have nothing that lets us look down on anyone else who walks in these doors!" With this in mind, let's think about practical ways to live out the gospel.

WEEK 9: ROMANS 3:21–31

INTRODUCTION

Having laid out the universal problem of sin and the inability of the law to save, Paul now unveils the heart of the gospel — God’s righteousness revealed through faith in Jesus Christ. This passage marks a dramatic shift from the hopelessness of human efforts to the hope found in God’s grace. As we study these verses, we’ll wrestle with concepts like justification, redemption, and propitiation, seeing how they all point to the sufficiency of Christ’s work on our behalf. For the original Jewish audience, this message challenged their understanding of the law and their special status. For us today, it confronts our tendency to rely on our own goodness or religious performance. As we delve into this rich theological ground, let’s remember our theme of “Living by Faith” and consider how these truths can transform our daily walk with God. Whether you’re new to faith or a long-time believer, this passage invites us all to marvel at God’s grace and live in the freedom it provides.

ROMANS 3:21–31 (ESV)

²¹ But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it — ²² the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: ²³ for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴ and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵ whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God’s righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. ²⁶ It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. ²⁷ Then what becomes of our boasting? It is excluded. By what kind of law? By a law of works? No, but by the law of faith. ²⁸ For we hold that one is justified by faith apart from works of the law. ²⁹ Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also, ³⁰ since God is one—who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through faith. ³¹ Do we then overthrow the law by this faith? By no means! On the contrary, we uphold the law.

DAILY PERSONAL STUDY: ROMANS 3:21–31 (WEEK 9)

Day One

Read Romans 3:21–24. Reflect on the phrase “the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law.” How does this relate to what Paul has been saying in the previous chapters about the law and sin? Consider how this revelation of God’s righteousness changes our understanding of salvation. Compare this with Galatians 2:16.

Day Two

Focus on the concept of justification in verse 24. What does it mean to be “justified by his grace as a gift”? Reflect on how this relates to the theme of “living by faith” that we’ve been exploring in this series. How does understanding justification as a gift impact your view of your relationship with God?

Day Three

Examine the term “propitiation” in verse 25. Research its meaning and significance in the context of Christ’s sacrifice. How does this concept address both God’s justice and His mercy? Compare this with 1 John 2:2 and Hebrews 2:17.

Day Four

Consider verses 27–28 regarding boasting and justification by faith. How do these verses challenge human pride? Reflect on areas in your life where you might be tempted to boast in your own righteousness. How does Paul’s argument here relate to his statement about not being ashamed of the gospel in Romans 1:16?

Day Five

Meditate on verses 29–31. How does Paul address the concern that faith might nullify the law? Consider how Jesus’ teachings in Matthew 5:17–20 align with Paul’s argument here. How does this passage deepen your understanding of the relationship between faith and obedience in the Christian life?

DAILY PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

Heavenly Father, as I study this pivotal passage in Romans, help me grasp the profound implications of Your righteousness revealed in Christ. Deepen my understanding of justification by faith and how it should shape my daily life. May these truths embolden me to live unashamedly for the gospel. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Know

Romans 3:21–31 marks a pivotal shift in Paul’s letter, moving from the universal problem of sin to God’s solution in Christ. As we begin our discussion, let’s reflect

on how these truths impact our personal faith journeys and our understanding of God's righteousness.

- If you had to explain the concept of "righteousness" to a child, how would you describe it?
- It's often said "The ground is level at the foot of the cross." How does this passage prove that?

Grow

Paul's declaration that God's righteousness has been revealed apart from the law is a cornerstone of the gospel message. As we dive deeper into this passage, let's examine how Paul builds his argument for justification by faith and consider its implications for our understanding of God's character and our relationship with Him.

- Read Romans 3:21–22. Paul says that God's righteousness has been "manifested apart from the law." What does this mean, and how does it relate to the Old Testament law? Consider Galatians 2:16 as well.
- In verse 23, Paul states that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." How does this universal indictment of humanity set the stage for the good news that follows?
- Look at verse 24. What does it mean to be "justified by his grace as a gift"? How does this relate to the concept of God's righteousness being revealed? John Piper says, "Justification is not the result of moral improvement. It is a declaration of God based on the alien righteousness of Christ imputed to us who believe." (The Future of Justification, 2007) How does this help clarify the concept?
- Verses 25-26 introduce the concept of propitiation. What does this term mean, and why is it significant? How does this show that God is both just and justifier?

Show

As we conclude our discussion, let's consider how these profound truths about God's righteousness and our justification through faith in Christ should impact our daily lives. Paul's emphasis on living by faith challenges us to apply these concepts in practical ways.

- In light of Romans 3:23, how might this verse impact the way you view and interact with others, both inside and outside the church?
- Reflect on your life. Are there ways you are trying to justify yourself? How does the gospel speak to that?

WEEK 10: ROMANS 4:1–25

INTRODUCTION

In Romans 4:1–25, Paul uses the example of Abraham to demonstrate that grace has always been God's answer, challenging the common Jewish mindset that Abraham was justified by his works. This week, we'll explore how faith, not works, is the foundation of our relationship with God. For the original audience, this radical reinterpretation of Abraham's role would have caused significant tension, especially regarding the inclusion of Gentiles as equal heirs of Abraham's promise. For us today, this passage invites us to wrestle with the balance between faith and works, the assurance of God's promises, and the nature of persevering faith. As we study, let's approach these verses with open hearts, ready to be transformed by the powerful truth that, like Abraham, we too are justified by faith in a God who brings life out of death and calls into existence things that do not exist.

ROMANS 4:1–25 (ESV)

¹ What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. ³ For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness." ⁴ Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. ⁵ And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, ⁶ just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works: ⁷ "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; ⁸ blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin." ⁹ Is this blessing then only for the circumcised, or also for the uncircumcised? For we say that faith was counted to Abraham as righteousness. ¹⁰ How then was it counted to him? Was it before or after he had been circumcised? It was not after, but before he was circumcised. ¹¹ He received the sign of circumcision as a seal of the righteousness that he had by faith while he was still uncircumcised. The purpose was to make him the father of all who believe without being circumcised, so that righteousness would be counted to them as well, ¹² and to make him the father of the circumcised who are not merely circumcised but who also walk in the footsteps of the faith that our father Abraham had before he was circumcised. ¹³ For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. ¹⁴ For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. ¹⁵ For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. ¹⁶ That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, ¹⁷ as it is

written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.¹⁸ In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.”¹⁹ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb.²⁰ No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God,²¹ fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.²² That is why his faith was “counted to him as righteousness.”²³ But the words “it was counted to him” were not written for his sake alone,²⁴ but for ours also. It will be counted to us who believe in him who raised from the dead Jesus our Lord,²⁵ who was delivered up for our trespasses and raised for our justification.

DAILY PERSONAL STUDY: ROMANS 4:1-25 (WEEK 10)

Day One

Read Romans 4:1–5 and reflect on Paul’s use of Abraham as an example of justification by faith. How does this challenge the idea of earning God’s favor through works? Consider how this relates to the theme of “not being ashamed of the gospel” from Romans 1:16. How might understanding justification by faith give you confidence in the gospel?

Day Two

Focus on Romans 4:6–8 and David’s words about the blessedness of forgiveness. How does this reinforce Paul’s argument about justification by faith? Reflect on the hymn “It is Well” mentioned in the notes. How does the line “My sin, not in part but the whole, is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more” relate to this passage?

Day Three

Examine Romans 4:9–12 and the timing of Abraham’s justification in relation to his circumcision. How does this support Paul’s argument for the inclusion of Gentiles in God’s family? Consider how this relates to the universality of the gospel message discussed in Romans 1:16 (“to the Jew first and also to the Greek”).

Day Four

Study Romans 4:13–17 and Paul’s contrast between the promise through faith and the law. How does this expand on the concept of “the righteousness of God”

introduced in Romans 1:17? Reflect on how this impacts your understanding of God's grace and human responsibility in salvation.

Day Five

Read Romans 4:18–25 and consider Abraham's faith in God's promise despite impossible circumstances. How does this exemplify "living by faith," the theme of our Romans series? Reflect on verse 20: "No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God." How can you apply this attitude to challenges in your own faith journey?

DAILY PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

Heavenly Father, as I study Your Word this week, help me grasp the depth of Your grace and the power of faith. Like Abraham, may I trust in Your promises even when circumstances seem impossible. Strengthen my faith and help me live in a way that gives You glory. May the truth of justification by faith embolden me to share the gospel unashamedly. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Know

Romans 4:1–25 explores the concept of justification by faith, using Abraham as a primary example. As we begin our discussion, let's reflect on our own experiences with faith and trust, which can help us better understand the depths of Abraham's faith journey.

- Why do you think it is difficult for many people in our culture today to accept the concept of a free gift? Is it difficult for you to believe that salvation is a free gift or do you struggle with feeling like you have to do something to earn it?
- Share about a time when you had to trust someone or something despite feeling uncertain. How did that experience shape your understanding of faith?

Grow

Paul's argument in Romans 4 challenges the common Jewish mindset that Abraham was justified by his works. Instead, Paul demonstrates that grace has always been God's answer, even back to Abraham's time. Let's dive deeper into this passage to understand how faith, not works, is the foundation of our relationship with God.

- Read Romans 4:1–5. Paul uses Abraham as an example of justification by faith, not works. How does this challenge common misconceptions about

earning God's favor? Consider John Stott's statement: "Abraham was justified by faith alone, apart from works. This is the heart of the gospel." (The Message of Romans, 1994)

- Look at Romans 4:10–11. Why is it important for us to understand that Abraham was credited with righteousness before he was circumcised?
- Read 4:13–15. What does this say about God's plan of salvation? Was Jesus the backup plan after Israel failed to keep the law?
- Read verses 18–22. How would you describe Abraham's faith based on this passage? Timothy Keller states, "Abraham's faith was not blind optimism but a deep trust in God's character and promises." (Romans 1–7 For You, 2014) How can we cultivate this kind of faith in our own lives?

Show

Having explored the rich theological truths in Romans 4, we now turn to application. Just as Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness, our faith in Christ justifies us. This transformative truth should impact how we live our daily lives, encouraging us to trust God more fully and live unashamed of the gospel.

- There are times when our circumstances make it difficult for us to believe that God is who He says He is or that His promises to us are even possible. Is there an area right now where you are struggling to believe God's character and His promises? What brings you comfort or reassurance when you are feeling this disconnect? Consider Psalm 119:68, Isaiah 55:9, or any other scripture or characteristics of God that come to mind.
- According to 4:20–21, how did Abraham grow strong in his faith? How can you give glory to God this week by being confident that he can do what he promised?

WEEK 11: ROMANS 5:1-5

INTRODUCTION

This week we look at Romans 5:1-5, a pivotal juncture in Paul's letter. After the sobering reality of God's wrath against sin and the universal need for salvation, Paul now unveils the transformative power of justification by faith. This passage bridges the gap between our fallen state and our new life in Christ, revealing the profound peace we now have with God. For the original audience in Rome, this message of peace would have been revolutionary, challenging their understanding of divine-human relationships. For us today, it confronts our tendency to base our standing with God on our performance or feelings. Paul's words about rejoicing in sufferings may seem paradoxical, yet they offer a radical reframing of life's challenges. As we study these verses, let's consider how this peace with God impacts our daily lives, especially in the face of trials. Remember, following Jesus isn't about avoiding difficulties, but about experiencing God's love and growing in character through them. This passage invites us to live by faith, trusting in God's work both in our present struggles and our future hope.

ROMANS 5:1-5 (ESV)

¹ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. ² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

DAILY PERSONAL STUDY: ROMANS 5:1-5 (WEEK 11)

Day One

Read Romans 5:1-5 and reflect on the phrase "peace with God." How does this peace differ from worldly peace? Consider how this peace relates to the "wrath of God" discussed in earlier chapters (e.g., Romans 1:18). How does justification by faith lead to this peace? Meditate on John Stott's quote: "The peace which Paul is describing is not a subjective, psychological tranquility, but an objective state of reconciliation with God."

Day Two

Focus on the concept of "access" to God's grace in verse 2. How does this build on Paul's earlier teachings about justification by faith? Reflect on how

this access has changed your relationship with God. Compare this with the limited access to God's presence in the Old Testament (e.g., Exodus 19:12-13, Hebrews 10:19-22).

Day Three

Examine the phrase "we rejoice in our sufferings" in verse 3. How does this connect to Paul's earlier discussions about the fallen nature of the world (Romans 1-3)? Consider how this perspective on suffering contrasts with worldly views. Reflect on a time when suffering produced perseverance in your life.

Day Four

Meditate on the progression from suffering to hope in verses 3-4. How does this relate to the theme of "living by faith" that we've been exploring throughout Romans? Compare this with James 1:2-4 and 1 Peter 1:6-7. How might this progression challenge or encourage you in your current circumstances?

Day Five

Reflect on verse 5, focusing on the role of the Holy Spirit in pouring God's love into our hearts. How does this relate to Paul's earlier mentions of the Spirit (e.g., Romans 1:4, 2:29)? Consider how this assurance of God's love through the Spirit reinforces the themes of justification and peace with God. How does this truth impact your daily walk with God?

DAILY PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

Heavenly Father, as I study Your Word this week, deepen my understanding of the peace I have with You through Christ. Help me to rejoice in all circumstances, trusting in Your transformative work through sufferings. Fill me afresh with Your Spirit, pouring Your love into my heart. May these truths shape my faith and my interactions with others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Know

Romans 5:1-5 speaks of peace, suffering, and hope in the Christian life. As we begin our discussion, let's reflect on our personal experiences with these themes, which will help us better understand Paul's message to the Romans.

- Share a time when you felt a deep sense of peace, even in difficult circumstances. What contributed to that feeling?
- If you could ask God one question about suffering, what would it be and why?

Grow

Read Romans 5:1–2. Paul says we have “peace with God” through faith in Jesus. How is this different from just feeling peaceful? How does John Stott’s quote shed light on this: “The peace which Paul is describing is not a subjective, psychological tranquility, but an objective state of reconciliation with God.” (The Message of Romans, 1994)

- In verse 2, Paul mentions we have “access” to God’s grace. What does this mean practically in your life? Consider Douglas Moo’s comment: “This ‘access’ suggests the privilege of approaching God’s presence, a concept with rich Old Testament cultic associations.” (The Epistle to the Romans, 1996)
- Read verses 3–4. How can suffering produce perseverance, character, and hope? Have you experienced this progression in your own life?
- Look at verse 5. How does the Holy Spirit’s role in pouring out God’s love into our hearts relate to our hope not disappointing us? R.C. Sproul comments: “The indwelling Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our future glory, pouring out God’s love in our hearts.” (The Gospel of God: Romans, 1994) How does this deepen your understanding of Christian hope?

Show

As we conclude our study of Romans 5:1–5, let’s consider how we can apply these truths to our daily lives. Paul’s message challenges us to live out our faith in practical ways, even amidst difficulties.

- How can you share the hope you have in Christ with someone who might be struggling this week? Be specific about who and how you might approach them.
- If anyone in your group is suffering through something right now, take time to pray for them, remind them of the hope we have in Jesus, and brainstorm ways your group can come alongside them during this time.

WEEK 12: ROMANS 5:6–11

INTRODUCTION

In chapter 5:6–11 of Paul's letter to the Romans, we encounter a profound declaration of God's love. Building on the foundation of justification by faith, Paul now unveils the depth of God's love demonstrated through Christ's sacrifice. This passage challenges both ancient and modern readers, presenting a God who loves not the strong and beautiful, but the weak, sinful, and His enemy. For Paul's original audience, particularly those from a Jewish background, the concept of being God's enemies before salvation would have been jarring. Similarly, modern readers might struggle with the offense of human sinfulness in a culture that often emphasizes self-esteem and innate goodness.

Yet, in this tension, we find the heart of the gospel — that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. This week, we'll explore how this undeserved love transforms not only our relationship with God but also how we view and treat others, especially those we might consider unlovable.

ROMANS 5:6-11 (ESV)

⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die — ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹ More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

DAILY PERSONAL STUDY: ROMANS 5:6-11 (WEEK 12)

Day 1

Read Romans 5:6–8. Reflect on Paul's description of our condition when Christ died for us: "powerless," "ungodly," and "sinners." How does this contrast with the world's view of human nature? Consider how this relates to the theme of "not being ashamed of the gospel" from Romans 1:16. How does acknowledging our sinful state magnify God's love?

Day 2

Focus on the phrase "at just the right time" in verse 6. What might this mean in the context of God's plan for salvation? Compare this with Galatians 4:4–5. How

does this idea of God's perfect timing relate to the concept of living by faith that we've seen throughout Romans?

Day 3

Examine verses 9-10, noting the progression from justification to reconciliation to salvation. How does this build on Paul's argument about righteousness by faith in earlier chapters? Consider how this three-fold assurance strengthens our confidence in God's love and grace.

Day 4

Meditate on the concept of reconciliation in verse 10. What does it mean to be reconciled to God? How does this relate to the idea of peace with God mentioned in Romans 5:1? Reflect on how this reconciliation impacts your daily life and relationships with others.

Day 5

Consider verse 11, focusing on the joy we have in God through Christ. How does this joy differ from worldly happiness? Reflect on how this relates to the theme of "living by faith" that we've seen throughout Romans. How can you cultivate this joy in your life, even in difficult circumstances?

DAILY PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

Heavenly Father, as I study Your Word this week, help me grasp the depth of Your love demonstrated in Christ's sacrifice. Let the truth of my reconciliation with You transform how I view myself and others. May the joy of my salvation overflow in my life, making me unashamed to share Your gospel. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Know

Romans 5:6-11 presents a powerful picture of God's love demonstrated through Christ's sacrifice. Before we dive deeper into the passage, let's reflect on our personal experiences that might help us relate to this extraordinary love.

- Paul says that Christ died for the ungodly "at the right time." What does God's forbearance with our sin—waiting until the right time to send Jesus—demonstrate about his character?

- If you had to explain God's love to someone who had never heard of Christianity before, what analogy or example would you use?

Grow

Paul's words in Romans 5:6–11 challenge both ancient and modern perspectives on divine love. The apostle presents a God who loves not the strong and beautiful, but the weak, sinful, and enemy.

- Read Romans 5:6–8. Paul emphasizes that Christ died for us “while we were still sinners.” How does this contrast with human tendencies in relationships? How does it challenge our understanding of God's love?
- Look at verses 9–10. Paul uses the phrases “justified by his blood” and “reconciled to him through the death of his Son.” What do these phrases mean? How do they relate to each other?
- In verse 10, Paul speaks of being saved by Christ's life. How does Christ's resurrection and ongoing life contribute to our salvation? Consider Hebrews 7:25 in your response.
- Verse 11 speaks of rejoicing in God through reconciliation. How does this compare to other sources of joy in life? As C.S. Lewis said, “Joy is the serious business of Heaven.” (*Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*, 1964). How might this perspective change our approach to daily life?

Show

Having explored the depth of God's love and the significance of our reconciliation, it's crucial that we apply these truths to our daily lives. As Paul emphasizes, our response should be to rejoice in our reconciliation and to demonstrate this transformative love to others. Let's consider how we can live out these truths.

- Considering Christ's love for us “while we were still sinners,” how can you show unconditional love to someone in your life this week, even if they don't “deserve” it?
- Paul ends this section by saying we should rejoice in our reconciliation with God. What is one practical way you can cultivate and express this joy in your daily life this week?

WEEK 13: ROMANS 5:12–21

INTRODUCTION

In Romans 5:12–21, Paul draws a stark comparison between Adam and Christ, unveiling the far-reaching consequences of sin and the even more powerful effects of God's grace. This section may challenge us, as it likely did the original audience, with concepts like original sin and federal headship. We might struggle, as did the early Jewish believers, with the idea that sin and death reigned even before the Mosaic law. For us modern readers, the notion of being held accountable for Adam's sin may feel unfair, conflicting with our individualistic culture. Yet, as Timothy Keller notes, "The effects of Christ's obedience far outweigh the effects of Adam's disobedience." (Romans 1–7 For You, Keller, 2014) This passage invites us to see ourselves as part of a greater story — moving from our identity in Adam to our new identity in Christ. As we study, let's approach these weighty truths with humility, allowing them to deepen our appreciation for God's grace and strengthen our resolve to live by faith in Christ's finished work.

ROMANS 5:12–21 (ESV)

¹² Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—¹³ for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law.¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.¹⁶ And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification.¹⁷ For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.¹⁸ Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men.¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous.²⁰ Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

DAILY PERSONAL STUDY: ROMANS 5:12–21 (WEEK 13)

Day One

Read Romans 5:12–14 and reflect on Paul's explanation of how sin entered the world. How does this relate to the concept of "living by faith" we've been

exploring in this series? Consider how understanding our inherited sinful nature might deepen our appreciation for God's grace.

Day Two

Focus on Romans 5:15–17. Compare and contrast the effects of Adam's trespass with Christ's gift of grace. How does this passage emphasize the "abundance of grace" that Paul mentions? Reflect on how this abundant grace challenges or encourages you in your daily walk with Christ.

Day Three

Examine Romans 5:18–19. Consider the parallel between Adam's disobedience and Christ's obedience. How does this relate to the theme of "not being ashamed of the gospel" from Romans 1:16? How might this understanding embolden your witness to others?

Day Four

Meditate on Romans 5:20–21. How does Paul describe the purpose of the law in relation to sin and grace? Compare this with his earlier statements about the law in Romans 3:19–20. How does this deepen your understanding of God's plan for salvation?

Day Five

Reflect on the entire passage (Romans 5:12–21) in light of our series theme "Live by Faith." How does understanding your identity in Christ (rather than in Adam) impact your daily life and choices? Consider practical ways you can live out this truth this week.

DAILY PRAYER FOR THIS WEEK

Heavenly Father, as I study this profound passage, help me grasp the depth of my need for Your grace and the abundance of Your provision in Christ. May the truth of my identity in Christ transform how I think, feel, and act. Help me to live by faith, trusting in Your righteousness and extending Your grace to others. In Jesus' name, Amen.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Know

Paul begins by drawing a parallel between Adam and Christ, showing how one man's actions can have far-reaching consequences for all of humanity. As we begin our discussion, let's consider how this concept might play out in our own experiences and understanding.

- Read Genesis 3 together as a group. What did sin bring into the world?
- In your own words, how would you explain the gospel message to someone who has never heard it before?

Grow

Now, let's dive deeper into the text, examining Paul's argument and the theological implications of his words. As we do so, we'll consider how these truths challenge and enrich our understanding of the gospel.

- Read Romans 5:12–14. How does Paul explain the entry of sin and death into the world? How might this challenge our modern individualistic mindset?
- In verses 15–17, Paul contrasts Adam's trespass with Christ's gift. What specific differences does he highlight? How does this emphasize the power of God's grace?
- Read verses 18–19. How does Paul use the concept of "the one" and "the many" to explain both condemnation and justification? What implications does this have for our understanding of salvation?
- Tim Keller notes, "The effects of Christ's obedience far outweigh the effects of Adam's disobedience" (Romans 1–7 For You). How does Paul emphasize this in verses 15–21? How should this shape our view of God's grace?

Show

As we conclude our discussion, let's consider how the truths we've explored in this passage can transform our daily lives. Paul's teachings on our identity in Christ and the abundance of grace have profound implications for how we live out our faith.

- How does understanding your identity as "in Christ" rather than "in Adam" change the way you approach your daily life and struggles with sin?
- Take time this week to reflect on God's grace to you in Jesus. If possible, write down all the ways you can see his grace in each area of your life. Praise him for his goodness to you, even while you were still a sinner.

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES:

- *Romans 1–7 For You: For Reading, for Feeding, for Leading* by Timothy Keller — <https://www.amazon.com/Romans-1-7-You-Timothy-Keller/dp/1908762918>
- *Knowing the Bible: Romans* by Jared Wilson — <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/knowning-bible-romans>
- *Exalting Jesus in Romans* by Tony Merida
- *Romans: A Concise Guide to the Greatest Letter Ever Written* by Andrew David Naselli — <https://www.amazon.com/Romans-Concise-Greatest-Letter-Written/dp/1433580349>

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